

OLD KAWAIAHAO CHURCH.

of churches and congregations from 1831 to 1839. At our mission station at Kailua, Governor Kuakini had erected an enormous church edifice in the native style, which would hold as many as two thousand people. In this were regularly assembled every Sunday large congregations, all squatted on mats. The missionary on duty for the day preached to them in familiar strain, striving to secure the attention of their untrained minds, and teach them the truths of the Bible. The people were rude in garb. The men wore the small kikel mantle, and the malo or breech girdle. Most of the women wore scant chemise of cotton or tapa, with a long pa-u wrapped around the loins. Rarely had any man even a shirt.

Most of these people took part in a simple Sunday School exercise, in which the more intelligent natives acted as teachers. Printed books were few, but gradually increased in numbers, until by 1839 the whole of the Bible had been translated and published. A tolerable degree of order was kept in these assemblies of natives, disturbed, however, by constant hacking and spitting. The huge and doughty governor was a frequent attendant. He and his wife, Keona, were royal chiefs, and accordingly of immense girth and stature. Kuakini was estimated to weigh 500 pounds. We occasionally saw him striding the only horse in Kailua, which bent and staggered under his weight.

Kuakini after more than ten years of Father Thurston's devoted and prudent labors, had grown to be a very steadfast and efficient supporter of the missionaries. He was, however, more of a statesman than a pietist, and ruled the population of the great Island with an iron hand. The masses of the people were mere serfs, and suffered severe oppression. Their condition was that of very great poverty, and in daily life their persons and houses presented a very squalid appearance. There were among them a few individuals of some little chiefish rank, who had some small means.

The two missionaries at this station of Kailua, Asa Thurston and Artemus Bishop, were active and faithful pastors. They alternated in regular duties at the central church, and in Sunday and week day visits to outlying parishes from three to six miles distant, which they reached on foot or by canoe. They did much work in schools, where reading and writing were the chief lessons, taught by very ignorant native helpers. Of these teachers, at first an almost universal practice was to hold the little primer before the pupils so as to be upside down to the latter. The scholars were all learning to read their books upside down. Most of the pupils were adults, among whom there had grown to be much eagerness for the pala-pala, or book learning.

As early as 1826, before my birth, a great impulse had been given to learning by the personal tours of the vigorous queen regent, Kaahumanu, who went all through the Islands, commanding the people to listen to the Kumus, or missionary teachers. They had no thought but to obey orders, and the labor of the missionaries was greatly facilitated so far as nominal attention was secured. Kaahumanu had been a somewhat dissolute and very imperious and tyrannical ruler, although of much shrewd wisdom.

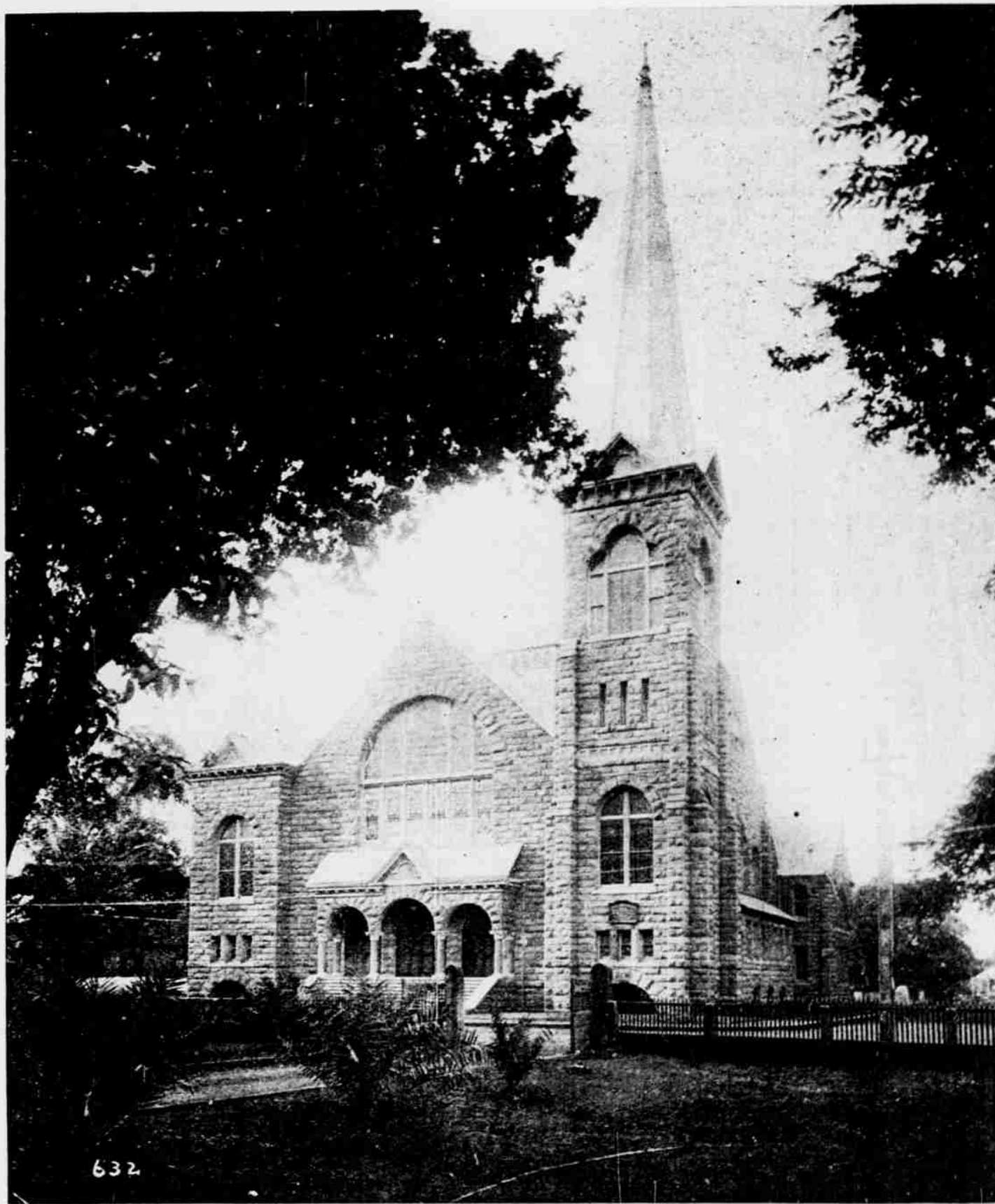
She early became amenable to the very wise and winning personality of Rev. Hiram Bingham and his wife. In 1825, Kaahumanu and several high royal chiefs and others, were baptized and organized into a church in Honolulu, which was the origin of the present Kawaiahao church. This Queen became a most devout and saintly Christian, heartily abandoning all the heathen practices of her former life.

We visited Honolulu almost every year during the period of the thirties, and my recollection is very distinct of the great

congregations at Kawaiahao. Here there great length, standing on ground to the great length, standing on ground to the seaward of the Waikiki end of the present stone edifice. This was usually well-filled with people in like condition with those at Kailua. There was, however, near the pulpit a considerable group of chiefs and their retainers, better clothed than the masses. The pulpit, a lofty one, was midway of the long Waikiki side of the great church, a little out from the side. Near it were one or two pews, enclosed for royal occupants, also a few settees for missionaries and other foreigners. The rest of the people squatted upon their mats, and often leaned prostrate in sleep during the long sermon.

I well remember seeing Kaahumanu at her home in 1832, and soon after when dying at a cottage in Manoa valley, which must have been not far from the present Castle mansion. She was a wonderful woman, a fit successor to Kamehameha's despotic but beneficent rule, and a chief propagator of Christianity among her people. For a year or so after her death some disorder followed, ending with the fatal expedition of Governor Boki, the chief opponent of Kaahumanu's policy. After that event, the young King Kamehameha became amenable to better influences.

On our tedious voyages between Kailua and Honolulu, we often tarried at Lahaina, where Rev. William Richards was the principal missionary. I recall only one Sunday spent there, probably in 1832, when we attended worship in the new and unfinished Waihee stone church. The walls were unplastered. A wooden gallery surrounded them above in true New England style. This was a novelty, and impressed itself on my mind. The congregation was doubtless like that at Kailua. There were some royal chiefs at Lahaina, with whom Mr. Richards had acquired great influence. Lahainaluna Seminary was then begun, and on one occasion, our ladies drove up there in a "Dearborn" wagon, which was perhaps the first wheeled carriage in these Islands. About that time, in 1836, the white ladies in Honolulu and Lahaina were quite commonly drawn by natives in small spring wagons. It was afterwards



CENTRAL UNION CHURCH (PROTESTANT).